

A Word of Knowledge: Don't Look Back

Don't look back: Three words that together make up what I believe is a timely prophetic utterance for the Body of Christ in this hour. Let me write them again: Don't look back.

Many are carrying hurts and wounds from the past. We don't shake them off and come up higher because we keep looking back to the people and circumstances that crushed our hearts. Instead of allowing the Holy Spirit to use the injustice to propel us to places of greater authority in the kingdom like Joseph did, we rehearse our past in our own minds like a scratched CD. Out of the abundance of the bitterness and resentment in our hearts, our mouth speaks poison that defiles us. And we remain less-than-effective in proclaiming the kingdom of God because we won't bury the dead and say farewell to the past. The good news is, Jesus is our past, present and future healer.

Others are paralyzed by the past. We've become spiritual paraplegics, so to speak—unable to move forward because fear of an unpleasant history repeating itself has gripped our souls. We've given up on the dreams that God has put in our hearts because of a traumatic life event arranged by the evil one who comes to steal, kill and destroy. We are afraid to pursue the prophetic promises the Lord has spoken over our lives, sometimes more than once. Like Lot's wife, we continue looking back at the death and destruction and figuratively turn into a pillar of salt, frozen in time. The good news is, Jesus came to loosen us from our spiritual paralysis.

Then there's shame, a spiritual disease that's running rampant in the Body of Christ because of past sin. Because we don't understand the heart of the Father, we wallow in a stew of guilt and condemnation and feel unworthy to move out into the

things of God. When Jesus said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62, ESV), I don't believe He was condemning someone who looked back. I believe He was warning us of the danger of looking back. Why? Because looking back makes us spiritually unfit for kingdom work. By looking back, we are essentially putting God's kingdom off until tomorrow. Faith is now. The good news is, Jesus bore all our shame and all our sin so we can repent and move forward in the grace of God.

Yes, there is such a thing as looking back to past victories to encourage ourselves in the Lord like David did. But other than for purposes of glorifying His name, looking back has little value—and it can rob our peace, our joy and even our destiny. I'm reminded of Kathryn Kuhlman's teaching on the Beatitudes. She taught that when God created man in His own image and after His likeness, He created man with a forward look, with a pair of eyes that would constantly be looking forward and not backward.

"By looking backward instead of forward, we bring on ourselves much of our distress, our unhappiness, our frustration, our confusion, our lack of peace. ... It seems the easiest thing in the world to do is to live in the past," Kuhlman said. "When we live in the past, there are and will be regrets. We see the nurturing of hurt feelings. There will be thoughts of injustice, there will be memories of things that should be buried and forgotten. We are reluctant to loose our hold on the past and hesitate to start living in the future. As a result, instead of joy and adventure, we know only the pangs of remorse, and we never have peace of mind."

My past has seen plenty of heartache and sorrow, and I am sure that in your own life you've experienced some of the same. I have had to learn by the grace of God to let go of the past—to walk toward the future by the power of God. I can tell you that I would be living a life of defeat if I did not resist the temptation to relive the abandonment, abuse and losses

I've experienced. I have made many mistakes in this life, and I have received many wrongs by people who were as close to me as anyone could get. I had to make it my determined purpose to move on. The secret to moving forward is to repent, forgive and press on.

Again, the Lord is saying to you, "Don't look back." It's not only prophetic; it's scriptural. In closing, consider the words of Paul the apostle, who had to forgive himself for religious mistakes and forgive others for trespasses against him:

"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-14, NKJV).

Receive this insight today, and run the race toward your prophetic destiny unburdened by the past. When you cross the finish line, Jesus will be there to reward you as a good and faithful servant who spent your energy building the kingdom instead of allowing the devil to destroy your peace. Amen.

****The intention of this article is not to suggest that we should bury pain or that it is wrong to revisit the past to receive healing from emotional wounds **as led by the Holy Spirit** in His timing. The point is that many are wallowing in the past, wallowing in self-pity, guilt, and shame, and experiencing unnecessary pain that prevents them from moving forward in God's will. The latter does not help us get free from a painful past.*

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